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A N S W E R

TO

Mr. ROWLAND HILL's Tract,

ENTITLED

"IMPOSTURE DETECTED:"

By JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

Jealousy, cruel as the grave! Cant. viii. 6.

*Michael, the archangel, when contending with the
DEVIL, durst not bring a railing accusation against
him.* Jude v. 9.

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A N A N S W E R

T O

Mr. ROWLAND HILL's Tract, &c.

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IN the tract just published by Mr. Rowland Hill, there are several *assertions* which are *not true*. And the whole pamphlet is wrote in an *unchristian* and *ungentlemanlike manner*. I shall first set down the *assertions* in order, and then proceed to the *manner*.

I. 1. "Throughout the whole of *Paul's* epistles, he can scarcely write *a single line* without mentioning Christ." page 3. I just opened on the 15th chapter of the first epistle to the *Corinthians*. In the last thirty verses of this chapter, how often does he *mention Christ*? In every *single line*.

2. "In that *wretched harangue*, which he calls a Sermon, he makes *himself* the only subject of his *own panegyrics*." p. 4.

Being aware of this charge, I have said, "I am, in one respect, an improper person to give this information; as it will oblige me frequently to speak of myself, which may have the appearance of ostentation. But with regard to this, I can only cast myself upon the candour of my hearers, being persuaded they will put the most favourable construction, upon what is not a matter of choice, but of necessity. For there is no other person, if I decline the task, who can supply my place, who has a per-

fect knowledge of the work in question, from the beginning of it to this day." Sermon, page 9.

I give an account of the rise of this work at *Oxford*, from 1725 to 1735, p. 10—14. At *London* and elsewhere, p. 16—19. In all this there is not a line of *panegyric upon myself*, but a naked recital of facts. Nor is there any panegyric on any one in the following pages, but a plain account of the Methodist Doctrines.

It may be observed, (if it is worth observing) That I preached *in the open air*, in October, 1735. Mr. *Whitefield* was not then ordained.

3. "Not a single line tending to vindicate, or illustrate any one fundamental doctrine of the gospel appears throughout the whole." p. 4. Yes; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*, is one fundamental doctrine of the gospel; *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* is another. And both these are vindicated and illustrated for several pages together.

4. "His sacrilegious hand violates the ashes of the dead, traduces the character of Mr. Whitefield, insinuates, that he was the first who preached *in the open air*; with the *greatest bitterness of speech*, traduces the dead, as a dissenter from the Church." p. 16.

My words are (Sermon p. 42.) "A good man, who met with us at *Oxford*, while he was absent from us, conversed much with dissenters, and contracted a strong prejudice against the church. And not long after he totally separated from us;" from my brother and me. This is every word I say about Mr. *Whitefield*. And is this "violating the ashes of the dead?" Is this "traducing his character?" Certainly not traducing him as "a dissenter from the Church, Much less "with the *greatest bitterness of speech*." Where is the bitterness? And this is the whole ground for pouring out such a flood of abuse, obloquy, and calumny! But Mr. Hill goes on, "With ungodly craft he *claws* up the ashes of the dead. He says, Mr. Whitfield by conversing with the dissenters" (I mean chiefly the Presbyterians in

in *New England*) "contracted a strong prejudice against the Church" page 18. I say so still. And how will Mr. *Hill* disprove it? Why, "he manifested his strong attachment to the Church, by erecting *Tottenham-Court Chapel* for the celebration of the Church service: yea, and reading the liturgy himself." Nay, if this proved *his* strong attachment to the Church, it will equally prove mine. For I have read the liturgy as often as he. And I am now erecting a *Chapel* (*Hinc illæ lachrymæ!*) for the celebration of the Church service.

5. "He cast lots for his creed." p. 8. Never in my life. "That paltry story is untrue." They who tell it, cast no honour upon him, who published a private letter, wrote in confidence of friendship.

6. "He gives up *the righteousness of Christ*." p. 9. No more than I give up his Godhead. But I renounce both the *phrase* and thing, as it is explained by *Antinomian* writers.

7. "He gives up the *Atonement* of Christ. The atonement, and the righteousness of Christ, he considers as mere words." p. 10. Nothing can be more false. It is not concerning these I advise

Projicere ampullas, & sesquipedalia verba.

"But a man cannot fear God, and work righteousness evangelically without living faith." Most certainly. And who denies this? I have proved it an hundred times.

8. "He RENOUNCED the grand protestant doctrine of Justification by faith alone, in those *horrid minutes*." I never renounced it yet, and I trust; never shall. The *horrid Minutes* Mr. *Fletcher* has so effectually vindicated; that I wonder Mr. *Hill* should mention them any more.

9. "After all possible candor and forbearance had been shewn to him." (By whom? By Mr. *Toplady*? Mr. *Richard Hill*? or Mr. *Rowland*, who has excelled them all?) "This *interloper*" (a pretty word, but what does it mean?) "has totally renounced the *gospel of Christ*." p. 11. Totally false:

unless by the gospel be meant Antinomian Calvinism.

10. "In his last year's minutes, he speaks of the *doctrines of Grace*" (Calvinism) "with as *much venom* as ever." Just as much. Let the reader judge, The words occur, page 11.

"Q. 26. Calvinism has been the greatest hindrance of the work of God. What makes men swallow it so greedily?

A. Because it is so pleasing to flesh and blood, the doctrine of Final Perseverance in particular.

Q. 27. What can be done to stop its progress?

A. 1. Let all our preachers carefully read our Tracts, and Mr. Fletcher's and Sellon's:

2. Let them preach Universal Redemption frequently and explicitly; but in love and gentleness: taking care never to return railing for railing. Let the Calvinists have all this on their side."

Ecce signum!

11. "He is most marvellously curious in forbidding his preachers to say, *My Lady*."

Were ever words so distorted and misrepresented! The words in the minutes are page 12.

"Do not imitate them (the Calvinists of Trevecka in particular) "in screaming, allegorizing, calling themselves ordained, boasting themselves of their *learning*, the *college*, or *my lady*."

Is this "forbidding them to say, *my lady*?" No more than forbidding them to make a bow.

12. "A vast number of *Sluts* had taken possession of the preaching-houses"—(No: the preaching-houses were not in question:) "and *female servants*, by courtesy called maids," (civil and kind! But neither were *servants* in question:) "are *filthy slovens* in their persons, dress, and *manœuvres*." (See, Mr. Hill understands *French*!) "So Mr. John gives the public to understand." No not Mr. John, but Mr. Hill. He goes on. "And how is this mighty grievance to be redressed?" Why, "says this Solomon in a cassock," (Is not that witty?) "Sluts are to be kept out, by not letting them in," p. 12.

And

And is all this wit bestowed upon three poor lines ?
The words are just these :

“ Complaint is made that Sluts spoil our houses.

“ How then can we prevent this ? ”

“ Let no known Slut live in any of them.”

What a colour does Mr. *Hill* put upon this ? But mean time where is Conscience ? Where is Honour ?

13. “ He denies the doctrines of the Church of *England*.” p. 13. That is, absolute predestination. Mr. *Sellon* has abundantly proved, that this is no doctrine of the Church of *England*. When Mr. *Hill* has answered his arguments, I will give him some more. The objections against lay-preachers (which come ill from Mr. *Hill*) I have largely answered in the *Third Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*. But I know not that any lay-preachers in connexion with me, either baptize children, or administer the Lord’s Supper. I never *intreated* any thing of Bishop *Erasmus* (who had abundant unexceptionable credentials, as to his episcopal character) Nor did he “ ever reject any overture ” made by me, p. 14. Herein Mr. *Hill* has been misinformed. I deny the fact ; let him produce his evidence. The *perfection* I hold is so far from being contrary to the doctrine of our Church, that it is exactly the same which every Clergyman prays for every Sunday, “ Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may *perfectly love thee*, and *worthily magnify* thy Holy Name.” I mean neither more nor less than this. In doctrine therefore I do not dissent from the Church of *England*.

14. However, “ he renounces the *discipline* of the church.” page 15. This objection too I have answered at large, in my letters to Dr. *Church* ; another kind of opponent than Mr. *Rowland Hill*. A gentleman, a scholar and a christian : and as such he both spoke and wrote.

15. “ He falsely says, Almost all who were educated at *Trevecka*, except those that were ordained, and some of them too, disclaimed the Church, nay, and spoke of it upon all occasions with exquisite bitterness

ternels and contempt." This is a terrible truth. I Lady *Huntingdon* requires it, I can procure affidavits, both concerning the time and place.

16. "He professes, he stands in no need of Christ's righteousness." page 23. I never professed any such thing. The very sermon referred to, the fifth in the first volume, proves the contrary. But I flatly deny that sense of imputed righteousness, which Mr. *Hill* contends for.

17. "He expressly maintains the merit of good works, in order to justification." page 24. Neither expressly, nor implicitly. I hope Mr. *Hill* has not read Mr. *Fletcher's* Checks, nor my sermons on the subject. If he has not, he has a poor excuse for this assertion: If he has, he can have no excuse at all.

18. "He contradicts himself concerning *Enoch* and *Elijah*. See his notes the former edition." p. 28. Wisely directed! For Mr. *Hill* knew the mistake was corrected in the next edition.

19. "He is ever raising malicious accusations against the *lives* and doctrines of all Calvinists, whether Churchmen or Dissenters, throughout all the kingdom." p. 29.

Thousands of Calvinists know the contrary, both Churchmen and Dissenters.

20. "He exerts all his art, to irritate the civil powers against all the people of God." p. 30. "He says, The Dissenters revile and lightly esteem the sacred person of the king." I answer 1. Are the Dissenters, are the Calvinists, all the people of God? 2. If you think they are, do all these defend the American rebels? Who affirms it? I hope, not a quarter, not a tenth part of them. 3. Do I say, All the Dissenters revile the king? I neither say so, nor think so. Those that do, are guilty of what you impute to me. They "irritate the Civil Powers" against themselves.

21. "He says he will no more continue in fellowship with Calvinists than with thieves, drunkards, or common swearers." No: I say I will have no fellowship with those who rail at their governors, (be they

they Calvinists or Arminians) who *speak all manner of evil* of them in *private*, if not in *public* too." "Such is the character he gives of the Calvinistic Methodists." p. 31. I do not; no more than of the Arminians. But I know there have been such among them: if they are wiser now, I am glad. In the mean time let him wear the cap whom it fits, be it Mr. Wilkes or Mr. Hill himself.

22. "This *apostate miscreant*" (civil!) "invites the king and his ministers, to fall upon," whom? Those who "*rail at their governors, who speak all manner of evil* of them, in *private*, if not in *public* too." I am glad they cry out, though before they are hurt, and I hope they will cease to *speaking evil of dignities*, before those who *bear not the sword in vain* fall upon them, not for their opinion, but their evil practices.

23. "He says, Calvinists and all Dissenters are *rebels*," p. 32. I never said or thought so. "But a few years ago, he himself thought the *Americans* were in the right." I did; for then I thought that they fought nothing but legal *Liberty*: but as soon as I was convinced they fought *Independency*, I knew they were in the wrong. Mr. Evans's low and scurrilous tracts have been confuted over and over.

24. "He trumpets himself forth as *the greatest man that has ever lived since Constantine the Great*," p. 37. *This too* is in *Italics*; it might have been in *Capitals*; but it is an utter falsehood. Mr. Hill might as well have said, "He trumpets himself forth as the King of *Great Britain*." The passage to which I suppose he alludes, and the only one he can allude to; is this, "When has true religion, since the time of *Constantine the Great*, made so large a progress within so small a space." Serm. p. 28. Is this "*trumpeting myself forth as the greatest man that has ever lived since then*?"

25. "All his disciples are commanded, *not to read*, what is wrote against him," p. 38. No: it is the
Tabernacle-

Tabernacle-disciples are commanded *Not to read Mr. Fletcher*. And reason good ; for there is no resisting the force of his arguments. Thousands, if they read them with any candor, would see, That *GOD willeth all men to be saved*.

26. Mr. Hill concludes, " I should have been glad to have addressed him in the softest and most tender stile. But those are weapons he turns to ridicule." p. 39. When? Shew me a single instance. Indeed, I never was tried. What Calvinist ever addressed me in a soft and tender style? And which of them did I *turn to ridicule*? I am utterly guiltless in this matter.

II. 1. I have now done with the merits of the cause, having refuted the charge *in every article*. And as to the *manner*, let any man of candor judge, whether I have not *spoken the truth in love*. I proceed now to take some notice of the *manner* wherein Mr. Hill speaks : to illustrate which, I need only present a few of his flowers to the impartial reader.

2. " All the divinity we find in this *wretched harangue which he calls a sermon*, are a few bungling scraps of the religion of nature, namely, Love to God, and Love to Man, which an heathen might have preached as well as Mr. *Jobn*" (Polite!) " and probably in a much better manner. Erase half a dozen lines, and I defy any one to discover, whether the *lying apostle of the Foundery* be a Jew, a Papist, a Pagan, or a Turk." p. 4.

" Else I should have treated *his trumpery* with the silence and *contempt* it deserves. But to see Mr. *Whitefield* scratched out of his grave, by the claws of this "*designing wolf*" (There is a metaphor for you!) " is enough to make the very stones cry out, or (which would be a greater miracle, still) redden even a *Wesley's* forehead with a blush." p. 5. I think it would be a greater miracle still, to make *a wolf blush*.

" The

" The dictatorial Mr. JOHN *lyingly* maintains argument enough for the *gaping dupes* whom he *leads by the nose*." p. 6.

" He and his *lay-lubbers* go forth to poison the minds of men." p. 11. Are not then the *lay-lubbers* and the *gaping dupes* just fit for each other ?

But who are these *lay-lubbers* ? They are "*Wesley's* ragged legion of preaching tinkers, scavengers, draymen, and chimney-sweepers." p. 21.

3. " No man would do this, unless he were as *unprincipled* as a ROOK, and as silly as a JACKDAW."

" His own people say, *He is a very poor preacher*, and that most of his laymen, raw and ignorant as they are, preach much more to the purpose. Indeed the old gentleman has *lost his teeth*. But should he not then cease *mumblng* with his gums ?" p. 25.

" Why do they not keep the *shatter-brained old gentleman* locked up in a garret ?" p. 36.

4. " I doubt not but for *profit-sake* he would profess himself a staunch Calvinist." p. 16.

" The Rev. Mr. John, Mr. Whitefield's *quondam understrapper*," ib. How sadly then did he mistake, when he so often subscribed himself, " Your dutiful, your obliged and affectionate Son !"

" Mark the venom that now distills from his *graceless pen*." p. 17. " The venomous quill of this *grey-headed enemy to all righteousness*." p. 19.

5. " The *wretch* thought himself safe, but the *crafty slanderer* is taken in his own net." p. 20.

" This truly Socinian, truly heathen, truly *infernal* passage is found in that *heretic's sermon*." p. 23.

" The most rancorous pretences that ever actuated the *prostituted pen* of a *venal profligate*." p. 30.

" With him *Devils* and *Dissenters* are terms synonymous. If so, what a *Devil* must he be !" ib.

" The sole merit of the disappointed *Orlando Furioso*" (how pretty and quaint that is !) " is seeking to inkindle a flame of Ecclesiastical and Civil Discord ;" No ; to put it out ; which I bless God

God is done already, to a great degree, “ And his sole perfection consists in perfect hatred of all goodness and all good men.” p. 31.

6. Now let all the world judge between Mr. *Hill* and me. I do not say, all the religious world: but all that have the smallest portion of common sense and common humanity. Setting every thing else aside, suppose him to be my superior in rank, fortune, learning, and understanding: is this treatment for a *young* man to give to an *old* one, who at least is no fool, and who, before Mr. *Hill* was born, was in a more honourable employ than he is ever likely to be? What can inspire this young hero with such a spirit, and fill his mouth with such language? Is it any credit to his person, or to his cause? What can men think either of one or the other? If he does not reverence me, or common decency, should he not reverence himself? Why should he place himself on a level with “ the ragged legion of tinkers, scavengers, draymen, chimney-sweepers?” Nay, there are many of these who would be ashamed to let such language come out of their mouth. If he writes any more, let him resume the Scholar, the Gentleman, and the Christian. Let him remember Him, who *left us an example, that we might tread in his steps: in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, peradventure God may bring them to the knowledge of the truth.*

LONDON:

June 28, 1777.

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